

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejections set forth in the Office Action mailed on January 7, 2004. Claims 54, 55, 60, 65 and 66 are pending.

Claim amendments were made to better define one embodiment of the invention, notwithstanding the Applicants' belief that the unamended claims would have been allowable, without acquiescing to any of the Examiner's arguments, and without waiving the right to prosecute the unamended (or similar) claims in another application, for the purpose of furthering Applicants' business goals and expediting the patent application process in a manner consistent with the PTO's Patent Business Goals. None of the amendments to the claims is related to the statutory requirements of patentability unless expressly stated so herein. Applicants reserve the right to prosecute the originally filed claims in the future.

Withdrawal from Consideration

The Office has withdrawn Claims 61-63 from consideration. These claims have been cancelled herein.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 31, 53, 56, 60, and 64 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Schall et al. U.S. 6,559,160. Without acquiescing to any of the Examiner's arguments, but rather for the purpose of furthering Applicants' business goals and expediting the patent application process, Applicants have cancelled these claims herein. As the rejection is now moot, Applicants request that it be withdrawn.

Claim Objections


Applicants acknowledge with gratitude the indication that Claim 54 and 65 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Conclusion

The Applicants respectfully maintain that all pending claims are in condition for allowance. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully request a Notice of Allowance for this Application from the Examiner. Should any unresolved issues remain, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at the telephone number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,

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